THE ISLE OF PINES.

By
JAMES MONT TAYLOR

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THE
ISLE OF PINES
STORY

(A paper researched, written and presented to
The Worthington United Methodist Church Men's
Fellowship, Worthington, Ohio; November 1993)

by

James Mont Taylor II

Edited by my grandsons:

Brian Robert Yocum

and

Jeffery Todd Taylor

1993

Dedicated to the Memory of

my father,

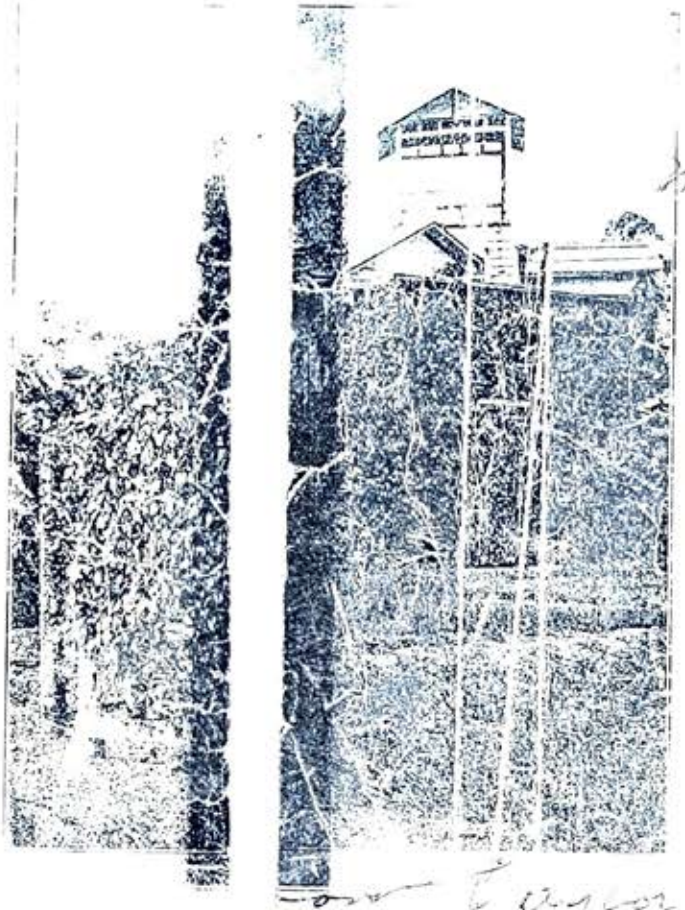
Ross William Taylor

and my grandfather,

James Mont Taylor I

Who in 1910 were among the first wave of
American pioneers to go to the Isle of Pines

James Mont Taylor I
On The Isle of Pines
1910



MY ROOM

ROSS TAYLOR

ROSS TAYLOR

ROSS TAYLOR'S
ISLE OF PINES TRUNK

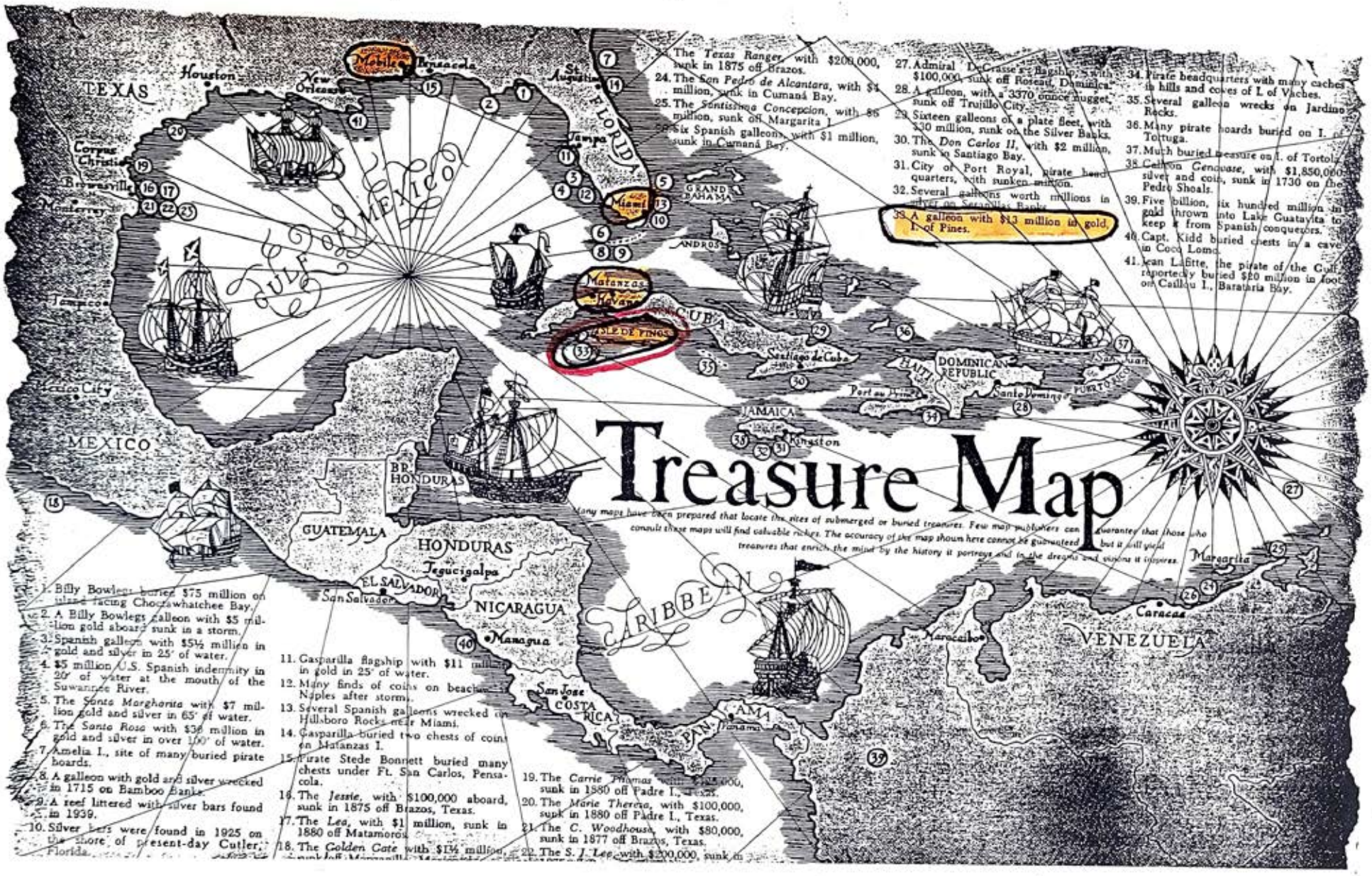
The Isle of Pines -- sometimes referred to by some writers as "Treasure Island," "Paradise Island" and "The Gem of the Caribbean." Since Castro, it has been known as, by Cuba, the "Isle of Youth" and now as "The Isle of Butte."

Who ever heard of the Isle of Pines? Well, Columbus did - discovering the Isle of Pines on his second voyage to the Americas, in June of 1494 on "St. John the Evangelist" day - making a hurried stop, only to stock his ship with wood and water - because of the fear of mutiny being on the minds of his sailors. Some researchers say it was the locale for Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island."

Why should I be interested in the Isle of Pines? First of all, it is a very mysterious, intriguing and interesting place. Secondly, you will learn that my family had a very tragic and devastating experience involving the Isle of Pines, which has haunted me most of my adult life and for 20 years or more, I have been chasing this story. Also, at one time, many Columbus, Ohio people were involved in the Isle of Pines as you will learn.

Where is the Isle of Pines? As you can see from the maps, the Isle of Pines is an island, lying 60 miles across shallow water south of Cuba, at Cuba's northern narrowest part. Also from the maps, you can see the location of the Isle of Pines in relation to the southeast coast of the United States and Florida. Note also the location of the city of Mobile in relation to the Isle of Pines, as this is important late in the story. The Isle of Pines is considered one of the islands of the West Indies. It has an area of between 800-900 square miles, which is about the size of the State of Rhode Island. Now being under Cuba's control, like Cuba, U. S. citizens have no access to the Isle of Pines except under certain conditions, such as researchers and news media people.

The Isle of Pines, like Cuba, was under Spanish rule until the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898. As described in a Pan American union bulletin of October 1911, "A Caribbean island, where there is something in the words which brings to one the feeling of soft sweet winds that ever blow caressingly over its valleys and hills." Words such as "soothing" and "magic-like"


Treasure Map
Many maps have been prepared that locate the sites of submerged or buried treasures. Few map publishers can guarantee that those who consult these maps will find valuable riches. The accuracy of the map shown here cannot be guaranteed but it will yield treasures that enrich the mind by the history it portrays and in the dreams and visions it inspires.
GULF OF MEXICO
CARIBBEAN
TEXAS
MEXICO
FLORIDA
CUBA
HAITI
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
JAMAICA
PUERTO RICO
BR. HONDURAS
GUATEMALA
HONDURAS
EL SALVADOR
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
VENEZUELA
Houston
New Orleans
Mobile
Pensacola
St. Augustine
Tampa
Miami
Corpus Christi
Brownsville
Monterrey
Tampico
Mexico City
Matanzas
Havana
I. DE PINOS
GRAND BAHAMA
ANDROS
Santiago de Cuba
Port au Prince
Santo Domingo
Kingston
Tegucigalpa
San Salvador
Managua
San Jose
Panama
Maracaibo
Caracas
Margarita
1. Billy Bowlegs buried $75 million on island facing Choctawhatchee Bay.
2. A Billy Bowlegs galleon with $5 million gold aboard sunk in a storm.
3. Spanish galleon with $5½ million in gold and silver in 25' of water.
4. $5 million U.S. Spanish indemnity in 20' of water at the mouth of the Suwannee River.
5. The *Santa Margherita* with $7 million gold and silver in 65' of water.
6. The *Santa Rosa* with $36 million in gold and silver in over 100' of water.
7. Amelia I., site of many buried pirate boards.
8. A galleon with gold and silver wrecked in 1715 on Bamboo Bank.
9. A reef littered with silver bars found in 1939.
10. Silver bars were found in 1925 on the shore of present-day Cutler, Florida.
11. Gasparilla flagship with $11 million in gold in 25' of water.
12. Many finds of coins on beaches near Naples after storms.
13. Several Spanish galleons wrecked on Hillsboro Rocks near Miami.
14. Gasparilla buried two chests of coins on Matanzas I.
15. Pirate Stede Bonnett buried many chests under Ft. San Carlos, Pensacola.
16. The *Jessie*, with $100,000 aboard, sunk in 1875 off Brazos, Texas.
17. The *Lea*, with $1 million, sunk in 1880 off Matamoros.
18. The *Golden Gate* with $1¼ million, sunk off Mazanillo
19. The *Carrie Thomas* with $75,000, sunk in 1880 off Padre I., Texas.
20. The *Marie Theresa*, with $100,000, sunk in 1880 off Padre I., Texas.
21. The *C. Woodhouse*, with $80,000, sunk in 1877 off Brazos, Texas.
22. The *S. J. Lee*, with $200,000, sunk in
23. The *Texas Ranger*, with $200,000, sunk in 1875 off Brazos.
24. The *San Pedro de Alcantara*, with $1 million, sunk in Cumaná Bay.
25. The *Santisima Concepcion*, with $6 million, sunk off Margarita I.
Six Spanish galleons, with $1 million, sunk in Cumaná Bay.
27. Admiral DeGrasse's flagship, with $100,000, sunk off Roseau, Dominica.
28. A galleon, with a 3370 ounce nugget, sunk off Trujillo City.
29. Sixteen galleons of a plate fleet, with $30 million, sunk on the Silver Banks.
30. The *Don Carlos II*, with $2 million, sunk in Santiago Bay.
31. City of Port Royal, pirate headquarters, with sunken million.
32. Several galleons worth millions in silver on Serranilla Banks.
33. A galleon with $13 million in gold, I. of Pines.
34. Pirate headquarters with many caches in hills and coves of I. of Vaches.
35. Several galleon wrecks on Jardino Rocks.
36. Many pirate boards buried on I. of Tortuga.
37. Much buried treasure on I. of Tortola.
38. Galleon *Genovese*, with $1,850,000 silver and coin, sunk in 1730 on the Pedro Shoals.
39. Five billion, six hundred million in gold thrown into Lake Guatavita to keep it from Spanish conquerors.
40. Capt. Kidd buried chests in a cave in Coco Lomo.
41. Jean Lafitte, the pirate of the Gulf, reportedly buried $20 million in loot on Caillou I., Barataria Bay.

are used. "The air has an indescribable quality that lets the temperature defy the markings of the thermometer. The northern winds that play among the giant pine trees are as soft as the touch of butterfly wings, and the sunshine seems to distill a perfume that truly sweetens the breezes."

It has been said the location is ideal beyond description. The sheltered position of the island protects it from the north, while the south east trade winds blow fresh from the Caribbean, with a steadiness for an atmosphere that can not be rivaled anywhere in the world. The only complaint the writer states is "it is monotonously good."

The Isle of Pines is actually two islands: the northern section of about 600,000 acres and the southern section of about 300,000 acres are joined by a narrow strip of land, often submerged. The northern section is that of rolling hills of marble and spirals of quartz and limestone. The valleys are covered with a sandy loam soil. The luxuriant vegetation growing on top of the coral formations is something of a mystery.

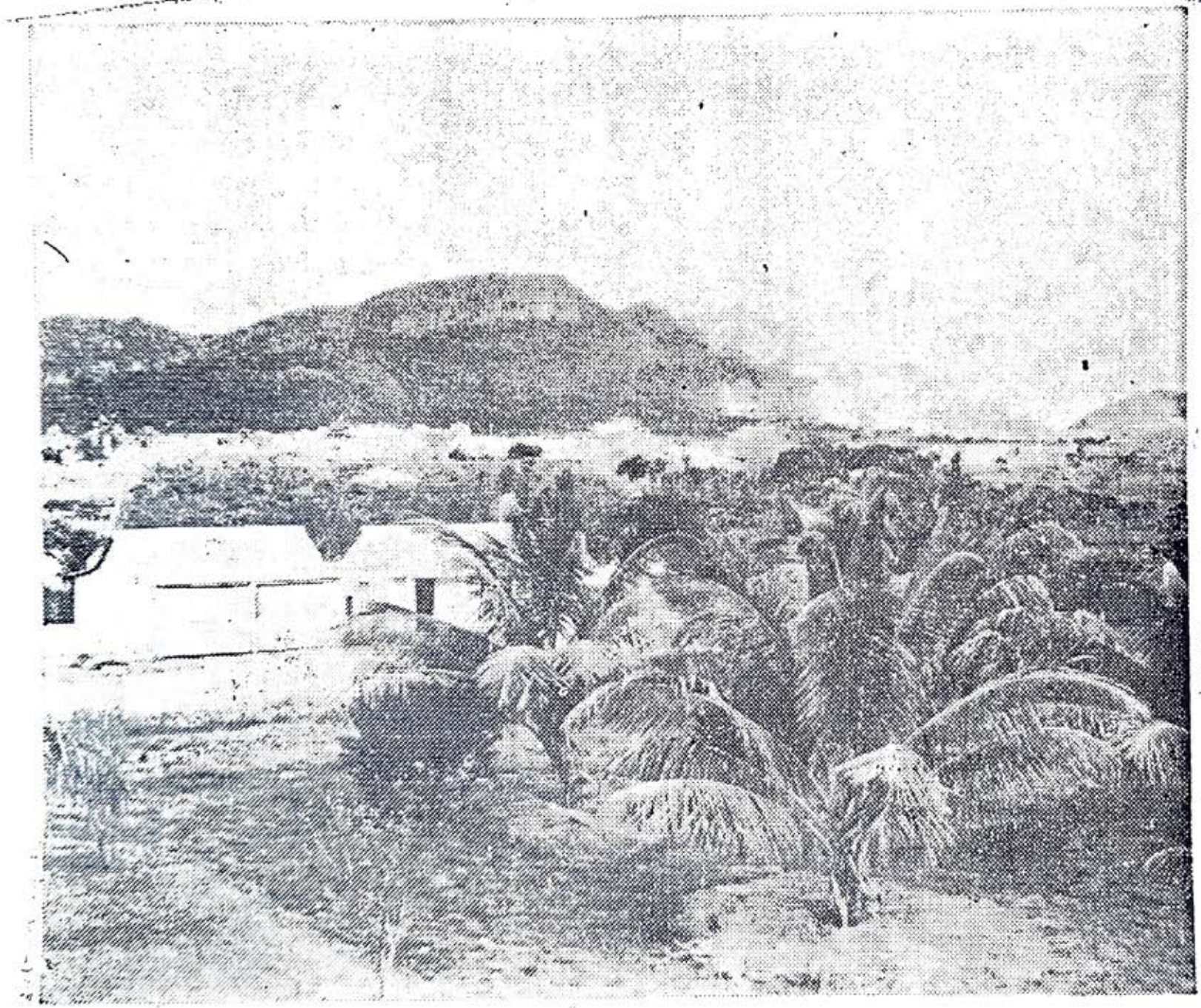
The southern section is made up of a system of coral rock covered by an accumulation of decayed vegetation from which giant hardwood trees of mahogany and cedar tower over an almost impenetrable jungle.

One of the gifts with which nature has endowed the island are the abundant thermal springs, which early on under medical supervision, the island could have become one of nature's outstanding winter health resorts.

The days are comfortable - 70-80 degrees; the nights are clear and cool. In the late 16th and early 17th century, sea pirates found refuge and security in the cover of the Isle of Pines. Drake came first, then the English, Dutch and French. Again quoting from the Pan American bulletin, "From Sir Henry Morgan, the knight who won his spurs by successful robbery and murder, to Mansfield and Cornelius (Peg Leg) Jols who waged war single-handedly against the throne of Spain, all the crews of sea rovers knew about, and used the shoals and sheltered bays as a pirates den, behind which their ships could lay safely under the lee of the island - and from here they would sail forth to attack the lumbering Spanish galleons, heavy with loot from Peru, then

(Photo from "Isle of Pines," L. A. Wright.)

PINES OF THE ISLE.



An intriguing view across the Casas Valley in the Isle of Pines, Cuba.

back again to divide their spoils and refit for another raid - which has left a heritage of tales of buried treasure on the island." Gold coins of ancient vintage have been found in many of its numerous caves, and residents speak of mysteriously acquired wealth and of iron-bound chests being found from time to time. The lure of pirate treasure has always gripped the island's mystique.

In 1630, the Crown of Spain gave the Isle of Pines, as a royal grant, to Capt. D. Hernandez Pedrosa, with the understanding that he "transform the pirates' den into a flourishing colony." The island passed to the Durate brothers by inheritance in 1706 -- all titles have been traced to these joint owners.

In the days of the traders in "Black Ivory," the island served as a slave fattening depot. The Africans shipped from the Congo were often in poor health by the end of a six week voyage. Crowded into ship hatches in the tropics, their condition was such that their value as slaves had diminished drastically. Imagine the joy Africans found when they were turned loose to work in the fields of this beautiful land with the abundance of food after the horrors of the sea crossing, and their sorrow when sold into bondage away from this beautiful island. During Spanish occupation, the island served as a Spanish penal colony. Many prisoners, finding the island so delightful, stayed on after being released rather than return to Spain.

Around 1900 the population of the island was around 2000, made up of Spaniards, and Caymaneros, people from the Great and Little Cayman Islands which lie about 150 miles south of the Isle of Pines; and 200 Americans. The Caymaneros have inhabited the island since the days of the pirates. They were mainly fishermen and would also hunt for turquoise in the shallow, clear seas.

C. M. Johnson was the first American to "discover" and take up residence on the Isle of Pines. At the close of the Spanish-American War, Mr. Johnson was drawn to the island by the rumors of wealth on the island in mahogany and cedar lumber. Johnson bought 17,500 acres of the best land on the island for $200, later buying up other lands and formed a company of 26

Americans to turn the island into a modern (1900) real estate scheme.

The rush of American investors to the island after the Spanish-American War was a result of a misunderstanding as to the ownership of the island. The treaty with Spain states, "Spain concedes to the United States the island of Porto Pica and other islands now under Spanish Rule in the West Indies." When the Cuban republic was established, the question arose as to whether the Isle of Pines was, in fact, a part of Cuba, or, one of the "other islands."

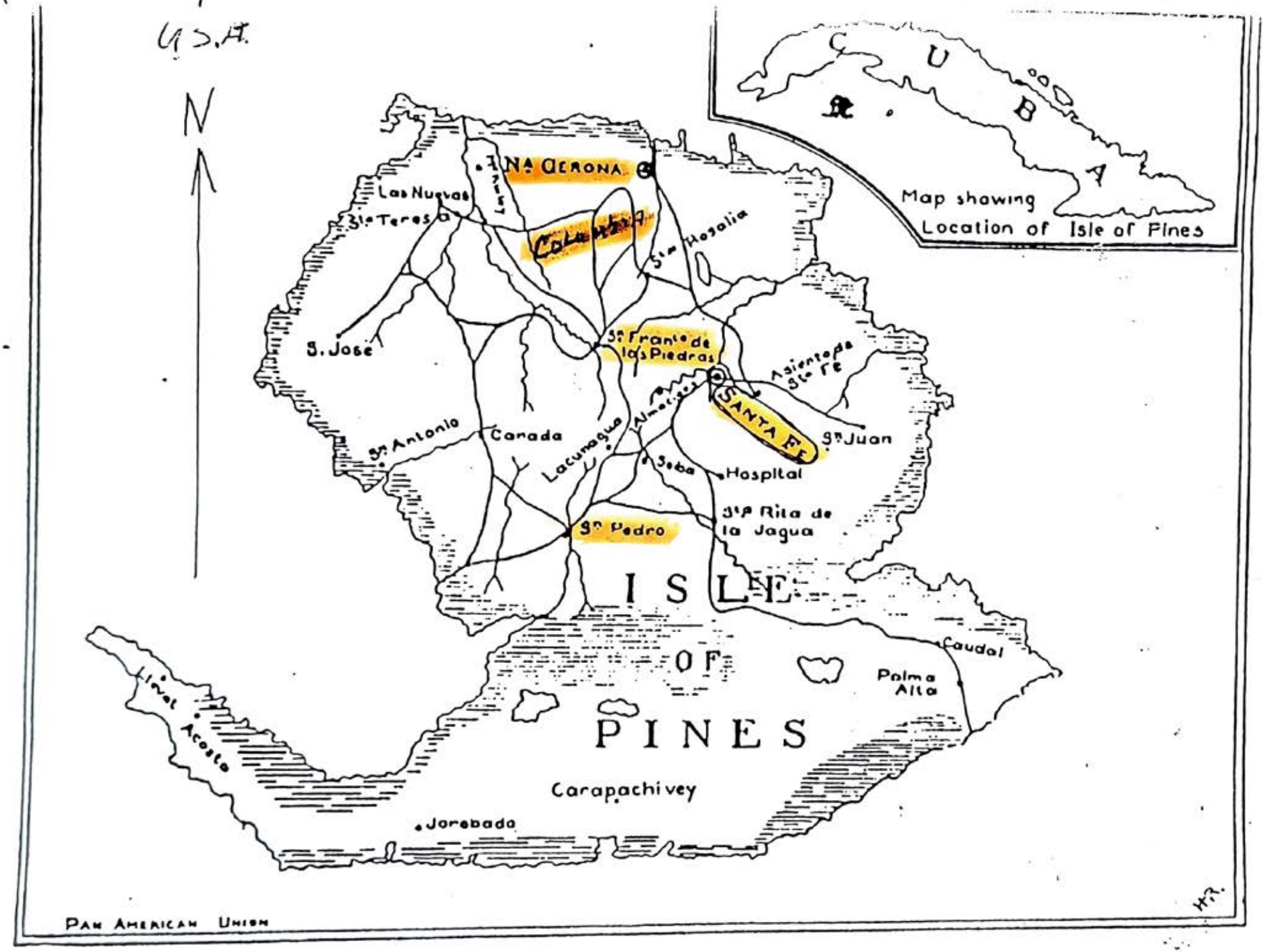
The Hay-Quesada Treaty, signed in 1904, gave Cuba title to the Isle of Pines, but was not ratified until 1925. In the meantime, the charms of the island continued to attract investors from the United States.

During the Spanish occupation, little was done to improve the island. The two towns first settled were Nueva Gerona, of about 150 people, and Sante Fe of about 300 people. Nueva Gerona was the capital, and due to a native mayor of Spanish ancestry and his love of the little town, many municipal improvements were carried out.

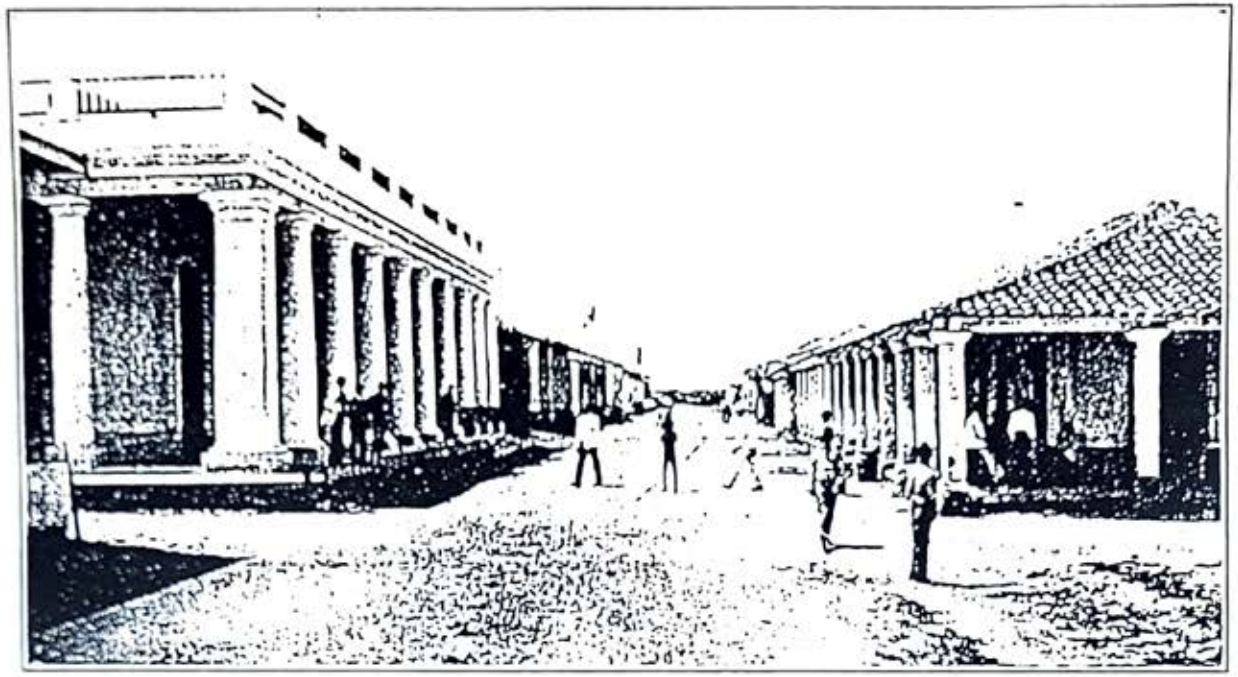
Among the 10 or so early investors to come to the island was L. C. Giltner, an American civil engineer, who in 1904, made the first modern map of the Isle of Pines.

The first American town to be founded was Columbia in 1902, eight miles from Nueva Gerona, at about the same time another town sprang up called McKinley. Soon Columbia possessed a hotel, general store, post office, school, church, many houses and a wharf on the Las Nuerva River. The period from 1902-1910 was a period of rapid influx of Americans and a time of land booms carried on by land promotion companies. Land could be bought for $3.00 per acre, but soon escalated to $50.00 per acre.

American corporations bought up large tracts of land from Cuban and Spanish owners, cleared the title, surveyed and laid out properties in 20 and 40 acre parcels. American pioneers of "Treasure Island" found all of the usual disappointments of a land boom that are experienced by investors including inaccurate information as to location, nature of the land, and access to the property, and exaggerated reports of opportunities for investors. It is estimated that most of the



1911—MAP OF THE ISLE OF PINES.



STREET SCENE IN NUEVA GERONA.

This town is the capital of the municipal district into which the Isle is constituted. Its bright-colored houses, red roofed, with porticoes under which pedestrians pass, as on a sidewalk, render it a typical Cuban town of unique attraction. Along the streets are flourishing places of business, including a bank, two weekly newspapers printed in English with Spanish supplements, several general stores, and a well-stocked cafe. On days when the boats from Cuba are scheduled to arrive or depart, Nueva Gerona becomes the rendezvous of the settlers from neighboring towns, and the place assumes the appearance and atmosphere of a characteristic busy city of the United States.

TOURISTS STARTING FROM THE AMERICAN HOTEL AT SANTA FE, ISLE OF PINES.

Besides the Spanish hotel of Ceballos, there is an American hostelry much frequented by tourists from the United States. It is a low one-story building, with colonial pillars and thatched roof, but excellently equipped and managed.

HOTEL CEBALLOS, AT SANTA FE, ISLE OF PINES.

Santa Fe is considerably the oldest and one of the most pleasant places of residence in the Isle of Pines. On the north side is a magnificent rectangular plaza, shaded by laurels; facing this is the comfortable Hotel Ceballos, an old Spanish hostelry managed by a most obliging landlord, very popular with the Havanese who come to the Santa Rita Springs for their medicinal waters. This hotel [illegible] to being the oldest in the island. It was erected in 1862, but its brick walls were not

900,000 acres on the Isle of Pines was under this land promotion scheme being greatly promoted in all sections of the United States.

One of these such land companies was the Whitney Land Company, purchasing 20,000 acres to be known as the San Pedro Estate in 1906. And now begins the Columbus, Ohio connections by what became known as the Columbus Isle of Pines Company, a creation of the Hammond brothers, Fred and Robert Hammond, identical twins. The brothers entered the College of Law at Ohio State University, being admitted to the bar in 1901. They paid their way through law school by having the agency for the Columbus Building and Loan Association, establishing branches throughout the state.

Upon graduation, a company was formed as Hammond, Hammond and Baker in 1903; Baker, a third member of the company. The company became a well known and a respected real estate development company, developing such subdivisions in North Columbus as East Indianola, The Fourteenth Avenue Area, The Indianola University, Indianola Forest and The Old Neil Homestead. At about this time, Hammond, Hammond and Baker at 701-3 New Hayden Building, Columbus, Ohio formed the Columbus Isle of Pines Company.

Under this name, the company purchased the entire Whitney-San Pedro 20,000 acre tract between 1908 and 1910. Calling their tract The Ohio Tract and creating the first development in this section, sub-dividing the land into 20 and 40 acre lots, improvements began at once. Their idea was to make this the leading place on the island - "A home for the most prominent people that should settle on the island." Thus began a very vigorous and successful promotion to interest Central Ohio people to invest in land on the Isle of Pines.

A Columbus Isle of Pines brochure of the Columbus Isle of Pines Company dated 1909 states, "...in eighteen months, we have sold over 7,000 acres of land in the San Pedro area -- have secured more than $400,000 in investments by individual purchases -- developers have planted about sixty individual grapefruit groves -- constructed many miles of roads -- erected several homes -- two small hotels -- a school house -- a saw mill -- blacksmith shop -- general store --

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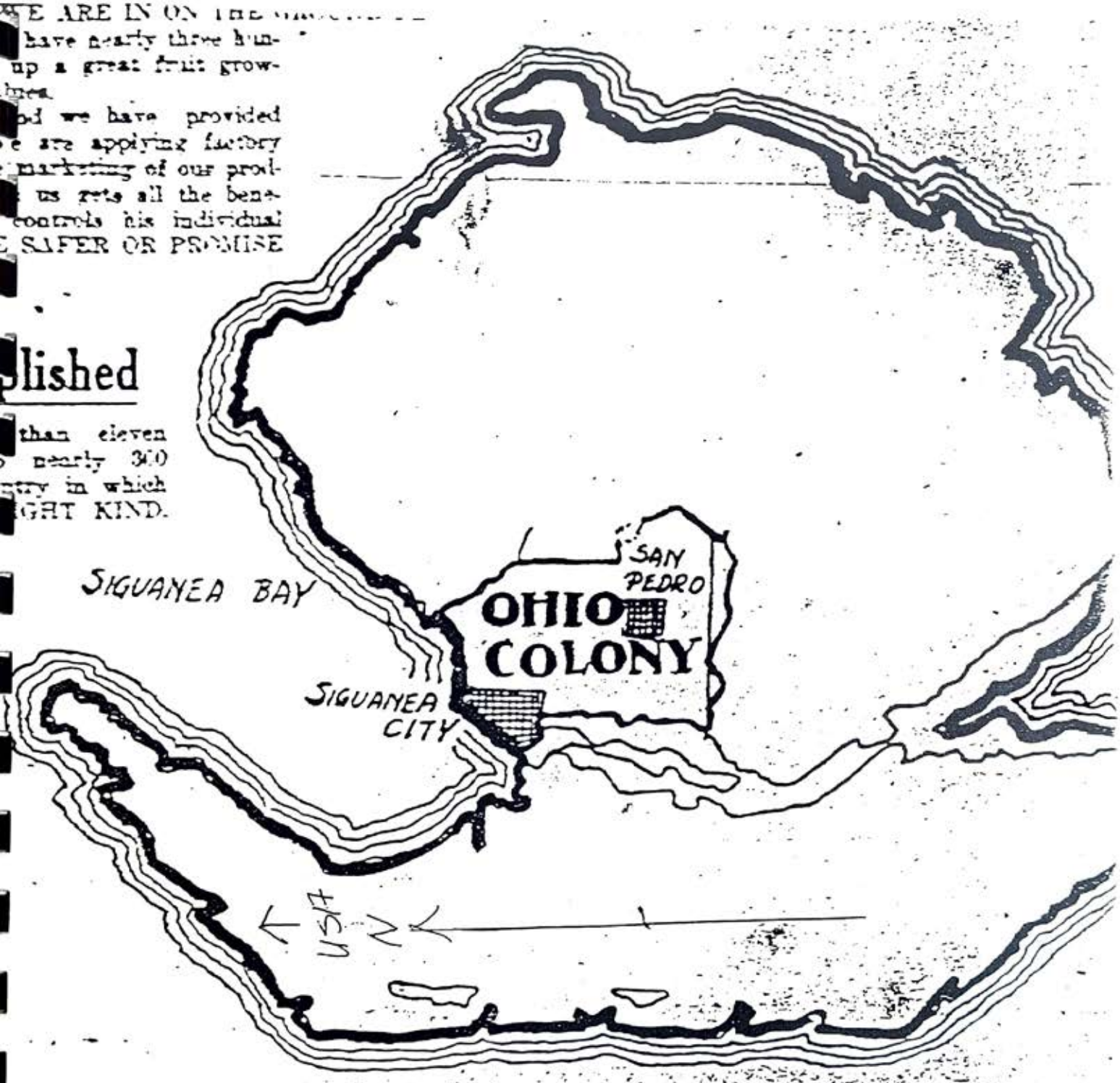


Our lands adjoin Siguanea Boy, the only deep water barbor between New Orleans and the Panama can
way from our Atlantic coast cities and New Orleans to the Canal, all vessels cross the mouth
Bay and pass within a few miles of our deep water docks which will soon be completed. Le
ship lines will land at these docks. Siguanea City, a few miles distant from the docks, is a
laid out winter and pleasure resort, planned by the Olmstead Brothers, the famous landscape
Brookline, Mass. San Pedro, a growing town, started two years ago, is the heart of the now f
Colony," and is surrounded by hundreds of acres of growing groves.

SINCE JANUARY 1, 1909

IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS, we have sold over 7000 acres of land in San Pedro—have secured more than $400,000 investment in the individual purchases and development of this land—have planted about sixty individual grape fruit groves aggregating something more than 700 acres—have constructed many miles of road—have erected several homes, two small hotels and a school house—secured a saw mill, blacksmith shop, general store and postoffice—have established a modern school which is taught by a high grade, experienced teacher of the Columbus Schools, and have formed an Industrial Club of active and progressive young men who look after every interest of the Colony—firmly establishing the most active and progressive settlement on the Island.

HAMMOND, HAMMOND & BAKER

701-3 New Hayden Bldg.

Columbus, Ohio

ISLE of PINES

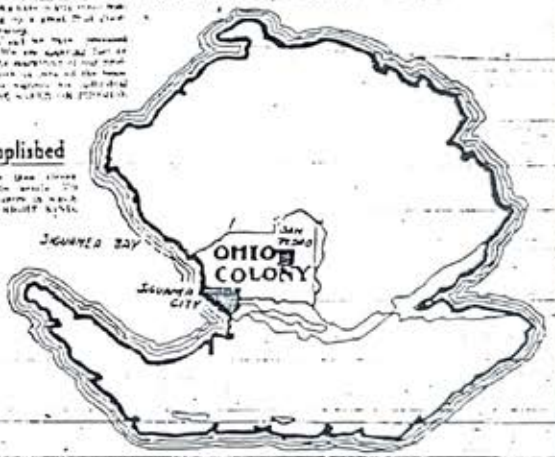
"What About the Isle of Pines" Now?

We want the public to know all ABOUT the Isle of Pines. We want business men, professional men, and all others looking for safe and profitable investments, to know this new country as WE know it. No country ever opened to settlement has been so unanimously commended by those who DO know all about its attractions and resources.

"BACK TO THE SOIL"

OUR ISLE OF PINES LAND OWNERS

Our Plan and Purpose



What We Have Accomplished

We Want Three Hundred More People to Join Us in This Great Development Enterprise. Call On or Write Us for Further Information. Investigate This Proposition Carefully. It is Worth While.

Hammond, Hammond & Baker

[illegible] Hayden Bldg. Columbus, Ohio

Isle of Pines developers ran this ad in the May 21, 1911, issue of the Sunday Dispatch, *seeking investors. The rough map in the upper left shows the location of the island, though its size is somewhat exaggerated here. The island today is called the Isle of Youth.*

OUR ISLE OF PINES LAND OWNERS

These are the names of those who have bought land of us in the Isle of Pines and have joined in its development.

The following live in Columbus and vicinity:

Chas. A. McAllister.....1646 Acres
Roe Emerson ..... 160 Acres
Dr. Horace L. Ketchm.. 682 Acres
A. E. W. Huffman..... 320 Acres
Wallace O. Bowers..... 111 Acres
Wm. H. Grigsby..... 240 Acres
Hammond, Hammond & Baker (Individual) .... 128 Acres
Willard S. Holcomb..... 205 Acres
Karl T. Webber..... 200 Acres
Robert W. McCoy..... 200 Acres
Hon. John A. Shaack.... 160 Acres
Mrs. Julia L. Lang..... 97 Acres
Mrs. Jessie P. Hatch..... 85 Acres
Frank L. Semmons..... 80 Acres
Charles W. Stuber..... 80 Acres
J. M. Valentine..... 80 Acres
Williston Painter ..... 80 Acres
Albert P. Halsey..... 75 Acres
Powell & Wilson..... 75 Acres
Charles T. Keech..... 60 Acres
William Hammond ..... 60 Acres
Stephen D. Jackson..... 60 Acres
U. S. Brandt..... 53 Acres
Arthur D. Andrews..... 40 Acres
R. J. Turning..... 40 Acres
Van Ness & Van Ness.. 40 Acres
Lee & Hopkins..... 40 Acres
Dr. E. B. Morrison..... 40 Acres
Dr. M. T. Dixon..... 40 Acres
Carl H. Poetz..... 40 Acres
Charles M. Bancroft..... 40 Acres
William B. Noyes..... 40 Acres
Joseph Duke ..... 40 Acres
Dr. John S. Carlton..... 40 Acres
Miss Mary C. Snyder.... 40 Acres
Dr. Louis P. Bethel..... 40 Acres
Dr. Carl Ritz ..... 40 Acres
Capt. Ira I. Morrison.... 40 Acres
C. L. Converse..... 40 Acres
Chappell & Chappell..... 40 Acres
Miller & Strandt..... 40 Acres
Horace M. Moore..... 40 Acres
John D. Loyd..... 40 Acres
Thomas W. Dupler..... 40 Acres
Charles L. Allen..... 40 Acres
Hon. C. M. Rogers..... 40 Acres
J. D. Karraghan..... 40 Acres
Misses D. G. & F. O'Bannon..... 40 Acres
Edson G. Pager..... 40 Acres
Clyde O. Haines..... 40 Acres
Hon. George S. Marshall 40 Acres
Elmer Barnes ..... 40 Acres
Edward L. Dorn..... 40 Acres
Charles C. Wilcox..... 40 Acres
Eby & Leasure..... 40 Acres
Dr. James A. & Robert T. McClure ..... 40 Acres
Thomas C. Knox..... 40 Acres
J. A. Weinland..... 40 Acres
Burton Griffith ..... 40 Acres
John B. Miles..... 40 Acres
Fred H. Lang..... 40 Acres
Dennis Boyd ..... 40 Acres
William E. Sims..... 40 Acres
A. A. Barber ..... 40 Acres
Dr. W. O. Thompson..... 40 Acres
George L. Rogers..... 40 Acres
Prof. J. C. Marriott..... 35 Acres
William T. Wells..... 32 Acres
Dr. Lewis W. Beery..... 32 Acres
H. L. Conard..... 30 Acres
Miss Jane S. Barrentin.. 30 Acres
Alan Leamy ..... 30 Acres
Fred J. Moore..... 32 Acres
..... 40 Acres
Irvin A. Morrissette..... 30 Acres
Homer Z. Bostwick..... 30 Acres
Edward B. Gerlach..... 30 Acres
Elber J. Shover..... 30 Acres
Prof. Charles E. Mead.... 30 Acres
Mary E. Mead..... 30 Acres
John C. Krieg ..... 30 Acres
Harlan Rhoads ..... 30 Acres
Profs. McCampbell, Wilts & Brumley ..... 30 Acres
George R. Taylor..... 30 Acres
May A. Erper..... 30 Acres
..... 30 Acres

Simon L. Siegfried..... 20 Acres
Ralph N. Stewart..... 20 Acres
Chaney & Chaney ..... 20 Acres
Edward L. Weinland.... 20 Acres
Maxey & Maxey..... 20 Acres
Dr. Howard S. Barrick.. 20 Acres
Mrs. Hannah S. Allen.... 20 Acres
Dr. H. C. Brown..... 20 Acres
Miss Mary C. Morrison.. 20 Acres
Fred Lisey ..... 20 Acres
Herbert L. Thomas..... 20 Acres
C. W. Coe ..... 20 Acres
C. H. Bishop..... 20 Acres
Frank T. Mercer..... 20 Acres
William McMullen ..... 20 Acres
Dr. Fred L. Hasbrouck.. 20 Acres
Hon. David F. Pugh..... 20 Acres
Lawrence R. Pugh..... 20 Acres
William H. Lisle..... 20 Acres
John E. Burrer..... 20 Acres
Frank Wagner ..... 20 Acres
Franklin Knauber ..... 20 Acres
Charles A. Grill..... 20 Acres
J. W. Montgomery..... 20 Acres
Fay M. Andrews..... 20 Acres
Fred F. Greene..... 20 Acres
Miss Lorena A. O'Hara.. 20 Acres
B. L. and H. Frosh..... 20 Acres
George W. Leasure..... 20 Acres
Hugh B. de Bord..... 20 Acres
William and Mrs. Martha Forrester ..... 20 Acres
Frank C. Unversagt..... 20 Acres
O. J. Swisher..... 20 Acres
Henry W. Strassbaufer.. 20 Acres
Wesley Fagenaugh ..... 20 Acres
Abraham Weaver ..... 20 Acres
J. C. Sims ..... 20 Acres
Frank L. Griffith..... 20 Acres
Dr. E. E. Gever..... 20 Acres
M. L. Foote..... 20 Acres
Miss Dora O. Lisle..... 20 Acres
Jos. Reed and Hoffaine.. 20 Acres
Dr. Lee C. Lavcock..... 20 Acres
Dr. Joseph E. Beery..... 20 Acres
Benjamin C. Kelsey..... 12 Acres
Edward E. Driffil..... 12 Acres
Floyd G. Chapis ..... 12 Acres
J. O. Wolfe..... 12 Acres
John T. Reed ..... 11 Acres
Leslie C. Dillon..... 10 Acres
Reed H. Game..... 10 Acres
Wilbur Crago ..... 10 Acres
Miss Florence O. Springer 10 Acres
Robert F. Huffman..... 10 Acres
Rolfe L. Stoppleff..... 10 Acres
Dr. Arthur W. Newell.... 10 Acres
Miss Tyra Barnes..... 10 Acres
John W. Thompson..... 10 Acres
Jacob H. Miller..... 20 Acres
Miss Ema Spencer..... 10 Acres
Henry Bolen ..... 10 Acres
Mrs. Ollie M. Coulter..... 10 Acres
Miss Mary Grigsby ..... 10 Acres
Joseph A. Goodwin..... 10 Acres
Forrest K. Pence..... 10 Acres
William H. Clemings.... 10 Acres
Frank W. Ware..... 10 Acres
Fred C. Morrison ..... 10 Acres
Eugene B. Mullen..... 10 Acres
Prof. H. Alfred Preston 10 Acres
A. J. Whiting ..... 10 Acres
B. B. Knapp ..... 10 Acres
Frank O'Hare ..... 10 Acres
Adam Ralt ..... 5 Acres

The following live outside of Ohio.

F. H. Davis ..... 160 Acres
J. W. Kemble ..... 160 Acres
R. F. Paddock ..... 160 Acres
J. F. Dawson..... 80 Acres
William H. Wood..... 75 Acres
August Peters ..... 60 Acres
Mrs. Elizabeth Haines.. 55 Acres
F. A. Dond..... 55 Acres
George R. Stanton..... 40 Acres
Mrs. Mary B. Stanton .. 40 Acres
E. L. Hallman..... 40 Acres
M. L. Kellogg..... 40 Acres
Clayton O. Howell..... 40 Acres
E. Nealing ..... 40 Acres
Miss Lilia Reed ..... 40 Acres

J. R. Aller..... 20 Acres
Charles W. Eccleston .... 20 Acres
E. Ben Knight ..... 20 Acres
J. K. Harper ..... 20 Acres
Rev. James A. Barnes... 20 Acres
Mrs. Charles M. Barnes 20 Acres
William H. Morgan..... 20 Acres
Thomas H. Wadsworth.. 20 Acres
W. H. Townsend..... 20 Acres
E. E. Downing ..... 20 Acres
A. C. Townsend..... 20 Acres
E. R. Williams ..... 20 Acres
L. C. Lombard ..... 20 Acres
Hemming Linden ..... 20 Acres
W. H. Frantz..... 20 Acres
A. Johnson ..... 20 Acres
A. I. Lint ..... 20 Acres
O. P. Smith..... 20 Acres
W. B. Tower ..... 20 Acres
Charles K. Beard..... 20 Acres
C. H. Sears..... 20 Acres
J. M. Savage ..... 20 Acres
M. P. Compton..... 20 Acres
L. A. Hall ..... 20 Acres
W. J. Taft ..... 20 Acres
C. W. Humphrey ..... 20 Acres
H. J. Frantz ..... 20 Acres
D. H. Putnam ..... 20 Acres
M. Achler ..... 20 Acres
L. Kuhns ..... 20 Acres
J. P. Hetzer ..... 20 Acres
S. P. Lantz ..... 20 Acres
H. C. Crawford..... 20 Acres
J. Milton Fees ..... 20 Acres
R. J. Robson ..... 20 Acres
Fred Fisher ..... 20 Acres
Fred Hart ..... 20 Acres
W. M. Critter ..... 20 Acres
Oscar B. Linton..... 20 Acres
Ernest Ericsson ..... 20 Acres
Edward N. Nelson ..... 20 Acres
John E. Rudd ..... 20 Acres
William W. Nell ..... 20 Acres
Edward Johnstone ..... 20 Acres
Raymond P. Shaw ..... 20 Acres
B. C. Hagman ..... 20 Acres
H. W. Meeker ..... 20 Acres
W. & M. Stoltenburg .... 20 Acres
L. B. Warden ..... 20 Acres
L. A. Morehouse ..... 20 Acres
C. C. Stoltenburg ..... 20 Acres
S. R. Crabb ..... 20 Acres
John R. Hall ..... 20 Acres
A. Thelen ..... 20 Acres
O. W. Sayre..... 20 Acres
Rounsey Hawley ..... 20 Acres
Mrs. N. C. Buchanan.... 20 Acres
J. E. Basham ..... 20 Acres
Thomas King ..... 20 Acres
W. R. Grant ..... 20 Acres
J. W. Potter ..... 20 Acres
W. W. Minn ..... 20 Acres
Miss Anna Floreth ..... 20 Acres
L. M. French ..... 20 Acres
Mrs. M. Benedict ..... 20 Acres
Caleb Barton ..... 20 Acres
H. P. Hansen ..... 20 Acres
J. Christensen ..... 20 Acres
Miss H. A. Harris ..... 20 Acres
Clara C. Townsend..... 20 Acres
Thomas Hickson ..... 20 Acres
J. L. Rash ..... 20 Acres
C. A. Townsend ..... 20 Acres
Julius Frederickson ..... 20 Acres
F. C. Upson ..... 20 Acres
H. M. Newgord ..... 20 Acres
H. C. Hubbard ..... 20 Acres
Charles D. Egelston..... 20 Acres
L. V. Lamb ..... 20 Acres
L. K. Burns ..... 20 Acres
F. H. Carpenter ..... 20 Acres
J. K. Bloodenburg ..... 20 Acres
W. A. Yarnall ..... 20 Acres
Miss Adella Hill ..... 20 Acres
Carl Wallin ..... 20 Acres
Walter L. Barnes ..... 20 Acres
Mrs. Minnie E. Royal ..... 20 Acres
John H. G. Dannenhauer 20 Acres
Mary O'Brien ..... 20 Acres
James Lindsay ..... 20 Acres
H. W. O'Brien ..... 20 Acres

and post office -- established a modern school -- taught by a high grade experienced teacher of the Columbus schools." It goes on and ends by stating, "firmly establishing the most active and progressive settlement on the island."

A full page ad in The Columbus Dispatch on Sunday, May 31, 1911 lists the names of over 300 Central Ohio people who had invested in the Isle of Pines venture.

From the papers of George S. Marshall, Mayor of Columbus from 1910-1912 and one of those who invested in the Isle of Pines, he states, "An enthusiastic group of 67 attended the first meeting of the San Pedro Growers Association, held in the Chamber of Commerce Building on October 7, 1912; a board of directors was named, a secretary and treasurer were named -- all men of prominence in the city at that time." In 1917, official stationery listed the address as the New First National Bank Building, Columbus,Ohio. Brands of citrus fruit grown were listed as Old Homestead, Old Settler and Treasure Island.

In addition to the cost of the land of $45 per acre, the grower paid $90 per acre for "clearing, grubbing, plowing and preparation of the land for farming and for planting 70 grapefruit saplings per acre and for application of fertilizer." Each year thereafter the owner was to pay the San Pedro Development Company to take charge of their groves by paying $50 per acre per year for groves up to one year of age, $65 per acre for groves up to two years of age and so on up to $70 per acre for all groves over four years old. In addition, shares of stock were sold by the San Pedro Development Company, but only to the grove owners, and was not transferable to anyone other than to other growers and their heirs in order to maintain complete control.

Financial statements for several years indicate considerable quantities of fruit was grown and shipped. However practically all monies raised had to be put back into the business. Thousands of dollars were spent on packing houses, equipment, railroads and railroad equipment, docks, terminals, horses, wagons, company barracks, office expense, salaries and advertising.

It was about this time (1910) that my grandfather, his two brothers and my father (then 23

years old) got caught up in the euphoria of this promotion and became involved in the Isle of Pines. It appears that in May of 1910 some of the family went to the Isle of Pines and bought 185 acres near Santa Fe. The little surviving mail sent back from the Isle of Pines was postmarked Sante Fe -- Isle of Pines.

It is not known who went first, and when all the brothers and my father arrived on the island I do know they were there in September of 1910. My grandfather and one single brother came back to Columbus earlier in the summer of 1910. Apparently it was my grandfather's idea to move his entire family to the Isle of Pines, a 15 day journey. My grandfather's family consisted of my grandmother, one married daughter, one daughter of 19-20, one son (my father, 23), and one teenage daughter.

A second brother of my grandfather and his wife, and my father stayed on the island while my grandfather and his other brother came back to dispose of their holdings: a fine new brick home at 65 16th Avenue, and a successful grocery at Euclid Avenue and High Street, and to ship their household goods, plus farm equipment and farm animals they purchased to the Isle of Pines. My grandmother refused to go, opting with the two daughters at home, to go to her mother's home in New Lexington, Ohio.

Apparently the house and business was disposed of in a short time. As the household goods were being packed for shipment, my grandmother turned to her teenage daughter, while packing a barrel full of Havolin china, and said, "I'll never see these again." One of the mysteries is why several items of furniture were left behind and are still here in the family.

While in Columbus, my grandfather and his brother purchased farm equipment, livestock and supplies to be shipped to the Isle of Pines. Everything, including the Taylor household goods, was loaded onto freight cars headed for Mobile, Alabama; my grandfather and his brother going with the shipment. At different intervals along the route, the cars had to be sidetracked so the animals could be fed and watered.

Upon arrival in Mobile and after a week of waiting, the entire shipment was loaded onto a

Mobile ala 9-16-10

Dear Wife &c

Friday Eve 8 Pm. Waldroff Hotel

Just got Back from feeding Stock. have got them in a good Place & easy to take care of war down to the Warph. & Saw them unloading a cargo of Bananas It certainly war a site. they have elevators that goes down in the hold of the Vessle & the Niggers Placed a Bunch of Green Bananas on each. Cloth Bucket. & Hoist them up & Lets them down to the Refrigerators cars. & about 200 coons take them & Places them on End in the cars Some of the Darkeys have Some clothes & Some almost Nothing on. they Load 50 to 70 cars (Rail Road cars) out of a Vessel never saw So Many Bananas before

2

Bro Will is still going Dressed up but I got him Dirty to Day Somthing was wrong with the Male Pig before we started. had Kind of Blind Staggers. I put Some Sweet oil in his ear on the train & It done him Lots of good So to Day I had a Veterinary Surgen See him & we had to Throw him Down & I told Will to grab him. & he had a Tussle for his Life. he certainly does Like to put It on. I told him to put on his other cloths he Said he would but thats all. he certainly is the most Backwoods Man I ever Saw he tried to stop me from Sending my empty Plats Back for More grub but I told him to Look after his own & that he was to easy for me to travel with. I Keep Telling him not to tell every one what we have for that is what they Like to Know

So they can Soak you on the
Price of everything but he cannot
Keep Still. our Boat will be
in tomorrow & will Load Tuesday
they have a fine Boat everyone
Says & the agt here Says he goes
over himself & theirs not any
Danger as the Route they take
have No Storms the weather This
time of year, is very calm
So dont worry & get Some flesh
on your Bones. would Like to
write you a nice Letter but you
would Show It to others I am afraid
So I will wait untill we meet
& then I'll tell you a nice Story.
we certain ought to have a happy
time when this is all over. It will
take a Lot to Repay me for what
we have done to get to the Isle
of Pines. (but never again) oh no.
have been Looking for a Letter. but
nothing doing. Love to all & a Kiss over
ment

Moble ala Sep 22-1910

Dear. Wife and Children

Just got Back from the Boat Looks very Strong & Snug. they are Loading 100 Tons coal on Board to Day & will Load our goods to night but dont think we will get away before Saturday. we are getting through very Reasonable. would of Done a Little Better if Will could Keep his face Shut. he has told every one he has met all about our Business he had a Team of Mules Bought for 580.00 but I Kicked & got the Mules & Set of harness for 515.00 Same way whatever he does. he certainly is the Softest thing I ever Saw. when you come try & Start So you wont have to Lay over in havana go By way of New Orleans. be Sure & watch your Trunks in havana if we are not at the Boat to meet you take The auto to the Farm

I did not get the money for the washer & If She Dont want It have It hauled to mrs Haddox' Sister on N Tenth ave as she wants It, I have Sent the Book case Back to Mc Crory & Sell the Lawn mower for what ever you can get & get what you can for the Garden Tools. Dont forget to See Morgan & get a Statement I think he ows me Something. & go to the Dispatch offise & Pay for advertising. It wont be much Dollar or so. I thought I was through with hustle when I Left ods but It has been Just about as Bad here I walk to the Stock yards twice a Day to feed & milk the cow about 4 miles evry day. & have Bought feed - Wire Fence - Scales &c with no good to me. he Sets By his Truck about half the Time he certainly Puts It on. when he got off the Train I was there & I wish you could of Seen him Looking for Some one. I let him Look for a while befor

I Showed my self. I ask him how he would Like to come in in a Box car at midnight & showed In the yard in the Dark. I Layed down in the car & went Sound asleep as I had no Rest Since I Left cals & Someone could of took every cent I had. I was nearly suffocated in a Tunnel in Tennisee my car was next to the Engine (2 Engines) & I thought the car was on fire. I droped to the floor to save my self. & held my nose & mouth as Long as I could but I'll never forget what I went thru as Long as I Live. The Engineer told me he was sorry. as he meant to Tell me to close the Doors. It was the Longest Tunne in the Road. don't say any thing to Lizzie about Will as she Tells him every thing. this is the warmest place I ever was in I don't think It's more than 1½ miles from H. & I'm Bit in a thousand places by Some Kind of Bugs. I will write you when we Live Love to all Ha Kiss J.M.T.

Bye Be

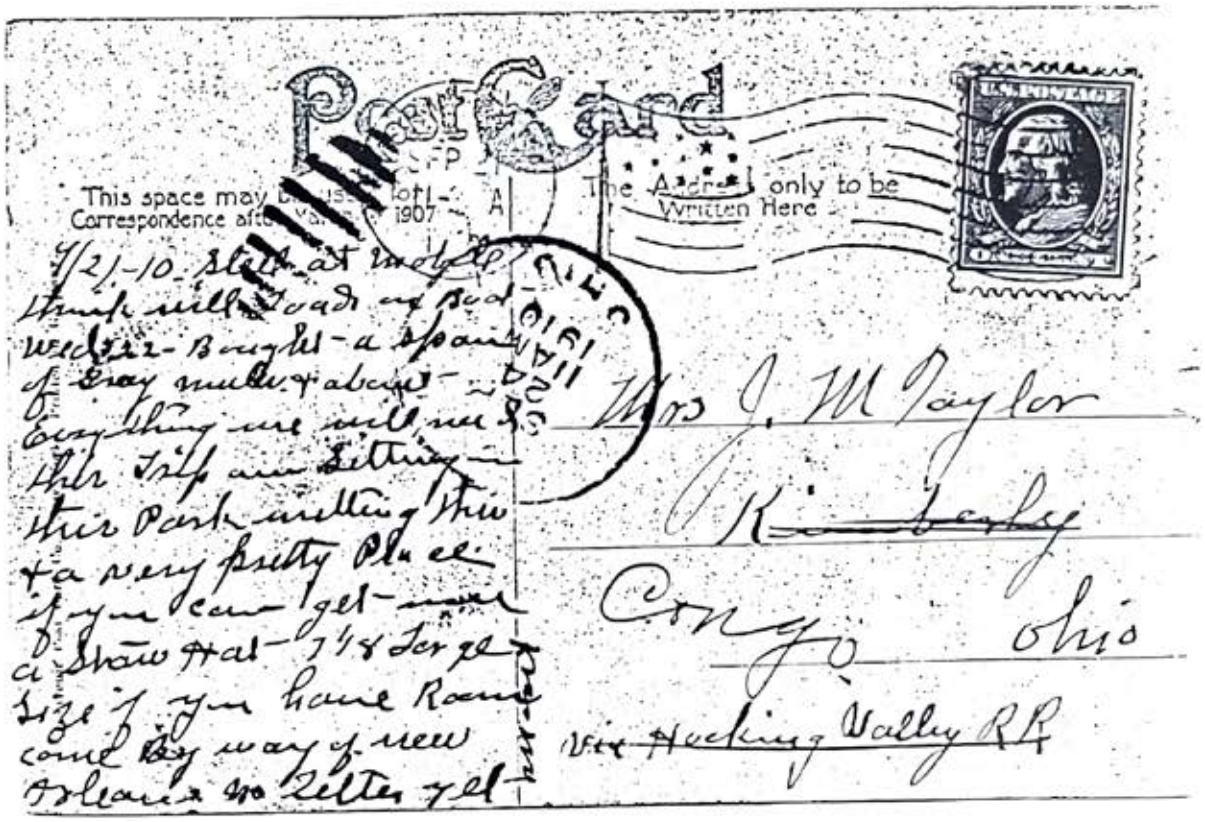
sailing ship. On September 22, 1910 my grandfather sent a postcard back to his "wife and children" saying, "Just got back from the boat - looks strong and snug - they are loading 100 tons of coal." On September 29,1910 the schooner left port with a crew of six men, my grandfather and his brother; loaded with coal, lumber, machinery, mules, cows, pigs, chickens and household goods all destined for the Isle of Pines. The Taylor inventory was valued at $16,000.

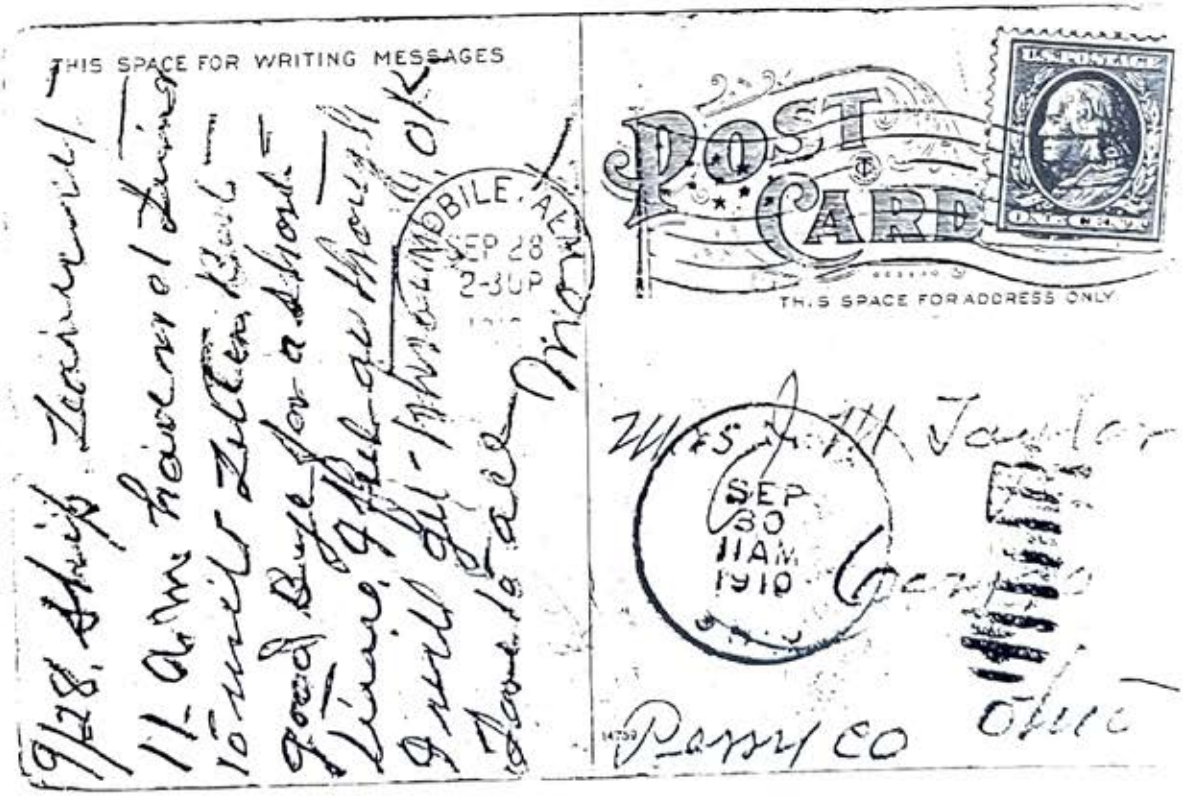
As one crewman would later recall, "The seas were fairly calm the first two weeks out." On October 13th, the weather turned - the wind came up from the Northeast then veered to the Southeast, continuing to gain strength and became extremely violent. On October 17, some crewmen were injured, one or two were washed overboard; the deck cabin was torn loose and washed into the sea. The schooner settled deeper and deeper into the sea. The captain ordered the main mast cut down. Those remaining on board lashed themselves to the mast stub. The Taylor brothers hung on, but seemed to know their fate. The brothers gave their gold watches to the remaining crewmen and cut themselves loose and were washed into the sea. The following day the four remaining crewmen were rescued by a British steamship.

Upon learning of the fate of the two brothers, my father and the third brother and his wife, who had stayed on the island, left and came back to Columbus. The family never mentioned or talked about the Isle of Pines ordeal. I was not old enough or interested to ask questions before the family died off, so the incident remains somewhat of a mystery. My grandmother died within the year from the grief of the tragedy.

Americans continued to be drawn to the Isle of Pines and improvements were still being made up until 1917 when several devastating reverses occurred. Number one, World War I. Attention was diverted from citrus groves and tropical playgrounds. Ships were in demand for the war effort thereby reducing shipping from the island to the mainland. The biggest discouragement came from a devastating hurricane, which destroyed most everything above ground, causing most settlers to be anxious to leave the island.

After World War I, a second wave of settlers came back to the island, advertisements





Post Card

This space may be used for Correspondence after Mar. 1907

The Address only to be Written Here

7/21-10 Stell at Mobile think will Load on Boat Wed 22 - Bought a span of Gray mules & about Everything we will need this Trip am Setting in this Park writing this & a very pretty Place if you can get me a Straw Hat 7 1/8 Large size if you have Room come By way of New Orleans no Letter yet

Mrs J. M Taylor
Kimberly
Congo Ohio
Vic Hocking Valley RR

THIS SPACE FOR WRITING MESSAGES

9/28 Ship Leaving 11 A.M. have not Lunch 10 miles Letter Boat good Buye for a short time, 9 feet au though I will get Mrs Lamb OK Love to all Mom

MOBILE, ALA
SEP 28
2-30P

POST CARD

THIS SPACE FOR ADDRESS ONLY

Mrs J. M Taylor
Congo
Perry Co Ohio

SEP 30 11AM 1910

TRAGIC DEATHS IN THE STORM

HOW CAPTAIN HALL AND THE TWO TAYLORS LOST LIVES ON SCHOONER HARRY K. FOOKS

Gulfport, Miss., Oct. 25.—Jose Ferrera, a young Cuban, one of the survivors of the ill-fated schooner Harry K. Fooks, which was lost in the great hurricane, together with the owner and captain, John H. Hall, of New Orleans, and others of the crew, tells of the awful tragedy as follows:

The Fooks sailed out of Mobile September 29, loaded with coal, lumber, machinery, two mules, some cows, pigs and chickens, all destined for the Isle of Pines. They experienced good weather until October 13, when the wind came up from the northeast and then veered to the southeast. On October 14 the big water tank was shaken loose from its moorings on deck and the captain, mate and some of the men tried to make it fast. While they were at work a heavy sea hit the ship and the tank was thrown against the bulwarks. Captain Hall was jammed in between the bulwarks and the tank, and just then another sea hit the schooner and lifted the captain's unconscious body overboard, but young Ferrera grabbed it just in time and lifted it back to the deck. It was found that Captain Hall's back

SHOCK OF TRAGEDY CAUSES DEATH OF VICTIM'S WIDOW

Mrs. J. M. Taylor Dies Shortly After an Operation at the Protestant Hospital.

HUSBAND LOST AT SEA

Schooner Carrying Him and Brother to Isle of Pines Sank in Gulf of Mexico.

WIFE NEVER RECOVERED

Son Returns from Scene of Drowning in Time to Reach Mother Before Her Death.

No. 300.

J. M. TAYLOR.

Former Columbus grocer, swept from deck of a vessel in a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico, and drowned.

W. F. TAYLOR.

Brother of J. M. Taylor, who, when he saw the former had been washed away, put his own lashings and went to a watery grave.

2 COLUMBUS MEN DROWNED IN GULF

TAYLOR BROTHERS

Who Were Hurricane Victims on Ill-Fated Schooner Harry K. Fooks

WERE WEALTHY

HAD COME FROM COLUMBUS, OHIO, AND WERE EN ROUTE TO ISLE OF PINES WHERE THEY HAD PURCHASED MUCH LAND.

In the graphic story of the destruction of the American schooner Harry K. Fooks, given in The Item of yesterday, recounted by Jose Ferrera, one of the survivors of the schooner, and who told of the death of Capt. John Hall and the first mate of the vessel, and the tragic fate of W. F. Taylor and J. M. Taylor, passengers who boarded the schooner at Mobile, it was stated that there was a mystery surrounding the Taylors.

This was cleared today by the local manager of the Isle of Pines Steamship Company, and by whom the vessel was chartered. The identity of the two men was made known.

W. F. and J. M. Taylor were brothers, aged 49 and 46 respectively. They took passage on the schooner here, having just arrived in Mobile from their homes in Columbus, Ohio. Their residence there was given as 65 Sixteenth avenue. They were going to the Isle of Pines to take up their future residence.

At the office of the Isle of Pines Steamship Company it was stated that the Taylors had recently purchased on the island a citrus farm; partly under cultivation, and 185 acres in extent. Another brother is in charge of this farm. They had visited the isle, returned to their home in Columbus to dispose of their holdings and were en route back to take up their permanent residance there. Members of their families were to follow them later.

On the schooner, belonging to the Taylors, were household goods, two mules, a cow, a heifer and a number of pigs.

At the office of the steamship company it was stated that the loss on the cargo alone footed $16,000, on which was an insurance of $12,000.

Arrangements were made today to advise the families of the Taylor brothers of their loss at sea.

TH

WAR DEPARTMENT.
BUREAU OF INSULAR AFFAIRS.
WASHINGTON.

October 27, 1910.

Madam:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 26th instant, stating that your brothers, William and J. M. Taylor, sailed from Mobile on the steamer HARRY K. FOOK, September 28th for the Isle of Pines, Cuba, that the newspapers today report this steamer was lost in the recent storm, and requesting that the matter be investigated and that you be advised by wire of the result.

I presume that your telegram was sent to this department under the assumption that the Isle of Pines was under the jurisdiction of the War Department. Such is not the case, however, the Isle of Pines being a part of Cuba, and, of course, is under the jurisdiction of that government. We are, therefore, I am sorry to say, in no better position to obtain any information with reference to this matter than you are. I have, however, transmitted your telegram to the Superintendent of the Life Saving Service, Treasury Department, and he may possibly be able to give you some information in this connection.

Very respectfully,

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Acting Chief of Bureau.

Miss Birdie Taylor,
31 Dana Avenue,
Columbus, Ohio.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

Nov. 1, 1910

Wrecks 118

Miss Birdie Taylor,

31 Dana Avenue,

Columbus, Ohio.

Madam:

Referring to your inquiry relative to the reported loss of your brothers W. I. and J. M. Taylor from aboard the schooner Harry K. Fooks while en route from Mobile, Alabama, to the Isle of Pines, there is enclosed herewith a newspaper account of the disaster, published in The Daily Picayune, New Orleans, La., of October 24, 1910.

The article was forwarded to this office from the office of the Collector of Customs at New Orleans. A copy of the note transmitting the clipping is also enclosed.

Respectfully,

S. I. Kimball

General Superintendent

2 encls.
CH.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

BEFORE ME: the undersigned authority personally came and appeared:

JOSE FERER who being duly sworn and deposes and says:

That he is a resident of Vera Cruz, Republic of Mexico, that he was an ordinary seaman on the American Schooner Harry H. Fooks. That he was an ordinary seaman on said vessel for one year previous to its loss as hereinafter stated.

That on September 29th, 1910, he left the port of Mobile, Alabama, on said vessel on a trip to the Island of Pines on the Cuban Coast.

That John H. Hall was the master of said vessel. And that a crew of six men and two passengers constituted all of the persons on Board.

That on or about the eleventh day of October 1910, said vessel encountered a hurricane in the open sea which lasted about nine days that on Friday the fourteenth of October the hurricane caused the water-tank to become unfastened and that it struck the captain in the back and knocked him down and he would have been carried to sea by the waves were it not for the efforts of deponent, who caught him and put him in his cabin, where the captain remained in his bunk unable to move until the following Monday morning when the sea broke over the cabin where the captain was lying injured with such force that it tore the cabin from the Schooner and the captain and his bunk and everything was washed to the sea and the captain was lost.

At about nine o'clock the same day, the mate was likewise washed overboard and lost. That on the afternoon of the same day the cook was washed overboard and lost at sea. That on the following day in the morning one of the passengers were washed to sea and lost and in the afternoon the other passenger was lost to sea and lost, leaving four sailors on the wrecked schooner including your deponent. All of whom were rescued on the morning of Wednesday 19th, at about seven o'clock by the British steamship Conniston-Water and brought to Gulfport, Mississippi, from whence

REPUBLICA DE CUBA.
TARJETA POSTAL.
(UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE.
POST CARD — CARTE POSTALE.)

Santa Fe. 10/4-10
Dear Sister, your cards rec'd and always glad to hear from you. I have rec'd two from Eva and B. is doing very well hope she does. "Well" Birdie You are surely alone. and no one hates it worse than I but dont worry and try and enjoy Your self and we will hope for something better. Good may it be soon. all well
Percy

Miss Birdie Taylor
31 Dana ave
Columbus.
Ohio.
U.S.A.

REPUBLICA DE CUBA.
TARJETA POSTAL.
(UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE.
POST CARD — CARTE POSTALE.)

SANTA FE
28
OCT
4 PM
1910

10/28 1
Dear Sister, We have as yet heard nothing more of the boys. But Scammon here doesn't think much of the first report, as it has not been confirmed yet. will let you know as soon as I can hear any thing. have hoped [illegible] all well - hope you are the same.

Miss Birdie Taylor
31 Dana ave.
Columbus
Ohio.
U.S.A

TRAVELER'S CHEQUES
PAYABLE EVERYWHERE
LETTERS OF CREDIT
CABLE TRANSFERS
PASSPORTS SECURED
TOURS AROUND THE WORLD

ESTABLISHED 1890

John G. Grossman

General Steamship and Tourist Agent

No. 13 SOUTH HIGH STREET

LONG DISTANCE 187 AND 2187

FOREIGN DRAFTS ISSUED ON ALL POINTS IN EUROPE

AGENT FOR ALL ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC STEAMSHIP LINES

CABLE ADDRESS
ENGROSS COLUMBUS

COLUMBUS, OHIO Oct. 4/10.

Mrs. J. H. Taylor,
Kimberly, Ohio

Dear Madame;-

Mrs. P. Taylor from Westerville was in, also Mr. Phelps, who has decided to sail to Havana on the same steamer and they will leave here Friday Oct. 14th at noon, reach New York Saturday morning at 7:30 and sail at noon on the S/S "Havana.

I have reserved for yuu room #20. Please advise if the accommodations are accepted and whether I shall make arrangements for your sleeper from Columbus to New York. The rate ro New York is $14.00 and $3.50 for a double berth.

Awaiting your favor, I am,

Yours very truly,

JnoGGrossman

Santa Fe Isle of Pines
Nov. 5/1910

Dear Cal & Girls-

We should have written to you sooner, but I just could not collect my thoughts enough to write. Have thought of you continuously since we received the sad news. You have our deepest Sympathy. I know you are just heart-broken. Hope Ross reached home safe. I hated to see him start away. This has been an awful shock to Percy, he is heart-broken. He does not sleep at nights, he gets up in the night and smokes and walks around, and when he does stay in bed he just tosses himself. I do not want him and Uncle Joe to stay in this God forsaken country any way.

They have had their eyes opened.
We are living with very little
but are getting along.
I baked four loaves of bread
and a pan of rolls this morning.
I am writing this on the porch.
it is very warm to-day.

Will close hoping this
will find you all well as
could be expected.

As Ever Lizzie.

CABLE "FETTER"

Sole Agent for John Deere Plows and Implements, White Hickory Wagons, N. Z. Graves Paints, Paroid Roofing and Armours Fertilizers. : : : :

Chas. F. Fetter

GENERAL MERCHANDISE.

Dixie Jewel Stoves and Ranges, White Wolf Stock Food, Ambrosia Flour, : : HARDWARE, STAPLE AND FANCY GROCERIES.

(F)

Nueva Gerona, Isle of Pines, W. I., June 26 1910

Miss Blanche Owens
Columbus, O.

Miss Owens—

Your name was handed me by Mr. T. J. Keenan and note from your letter you have had long experience with books and should like a position here on the Island.

I dont remember of meeting your Uncle who you say are settling places near Santa Fe, but trust something will turn up whereby you may find means of locating here.

I have Mr J. J. Bush with the books and while he is a very competent and good old gentleman, he has a dairy which takes up much of his time and when I have the opportunity to approach him on this subject, think it a good thing

CABLE "FETTER"

Sole Agent for John Deere Plows and Implements, White Hickory Wagons, N. Z. Graves Paints, Parnid Roofing and Armours Fertilizers.

Chas. F. Fetter

GENERAL MERCHANDISE.

Olgie Jewel Stoves and Ranges, White Wolf Stock Food, Ambrosia Flour, HARDWARE, STAPLE AND FANCY GROCERIES

(F)

Nueva Gerona, Isle of Pines, W. I. 191

for he and I both to have more time each to our selves, thus making a vacancy on the books if he cares to surrender them.

Would kindly like to hear from you on the subject and also amount you would expect.

Any one who has been to the Island knows me, you may ask them regarding the business.

Truly,

Chas F Fetter

flared again in American newspapers, magazines and on billboards in an effort to reawaken public interest in a home in the tropical Isle of Pines. Recolonization began -- efforts were made to resettle some of the land that had been abandoned by owners who had left the island in the wake of the hurricane of 1917. Soon 8,000 Americans owned property and more than 800 were living on the island.

The second wave of settlers brought improvements in roads to all parts of the island; telephone exchanges were installed and some 4000 acres of grapefruit and oranges were under cultivation.

In 1925, the long disputed question of ownership of the Isle of Pines was finally settled with the ratification of the Hay-Quesado Treaty, giving undisputed ownership of the island to Cuba. Up until that time, the United States had virtually complete control of the island. Also in the Platt Amendment of the Cuban constitution, the sovereignty of the Isle of Pines was undefined. The United States government hoped to sever the island from Cuba and annex it to the United States, and did, in fact, succeed in exercising control until 1934, when it was officially declared Cuban territory.

This caused a bitter disappointment among the American settlers who were counting on the island being under the U.S. flag. In 1926, another hurricane leveled much of the island. No attempt was made to rebuild and by 1931, the American population had all but left the island again.

A story in The Columbus Dispatch newspaper on January 19, 1941 by F. A. Carlson of Ohio State University entitled "A Failure Makes a Comeback" states, referring to the Isle of Pines: "From the year 1935 to 1940, 600,000 crates of grapefruit and 235,000 crates of oranges were exported to the United States -- along with watermelons, Persian limes, cucumbers, eggplant, sponges, salted shard hides, honey and sea island cotton." He also mentions that "beautiful marble is quarried, and tungsten may be added to the island's importance." He goes on, "The population (in 1941) of 10,000 includes 200 Americans, 175 Japanese, 150 Cayman, 40

Photographs from "Isle of Pines" I. A. Wright

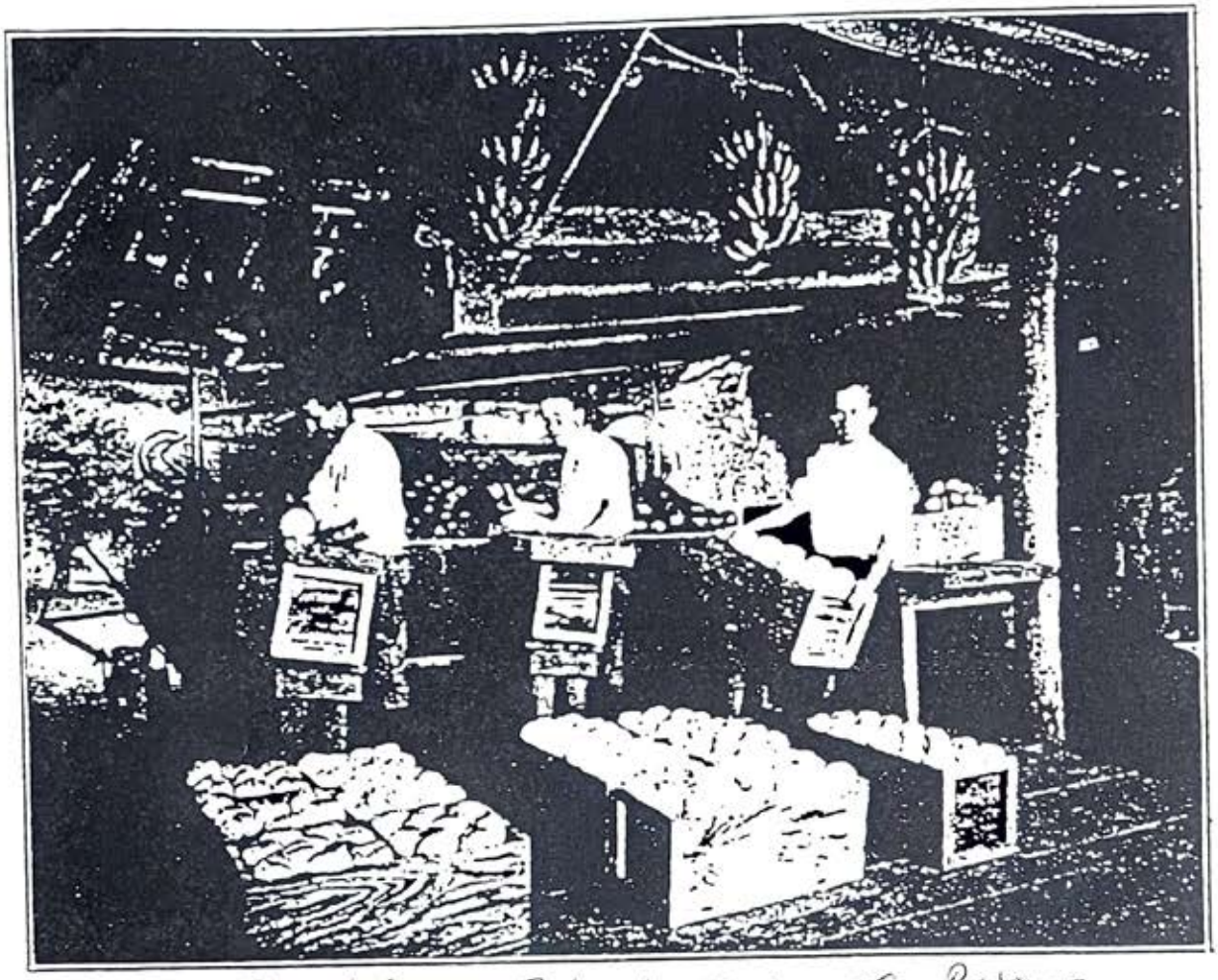
MOTORING THROUGH THE ISLAND.

BIBIJAGUA BEACH PICNIC PARTY, ISLE OF PINES.

Originally a sugar plantation existed in the Bibijagua district, but this old order of things is gone, and where once existed a vast estate there is now a well-platted subdivision of lots available for settlers.

CITRUS-FRUIT CULTURE ON THE ISLE OF PINES.

American settlers on the Isle of Pines have elevated themselves mainly to citrus-fruit culture. Their groves lie on the steep sides of the Cuba Hills; they dot the level country around Nueva Gerona and at Colombia and Santa Fe; they are grown on the white sand of Los Indios and in the newly



FRUIT PACKING SHED - ISLE OF PINES

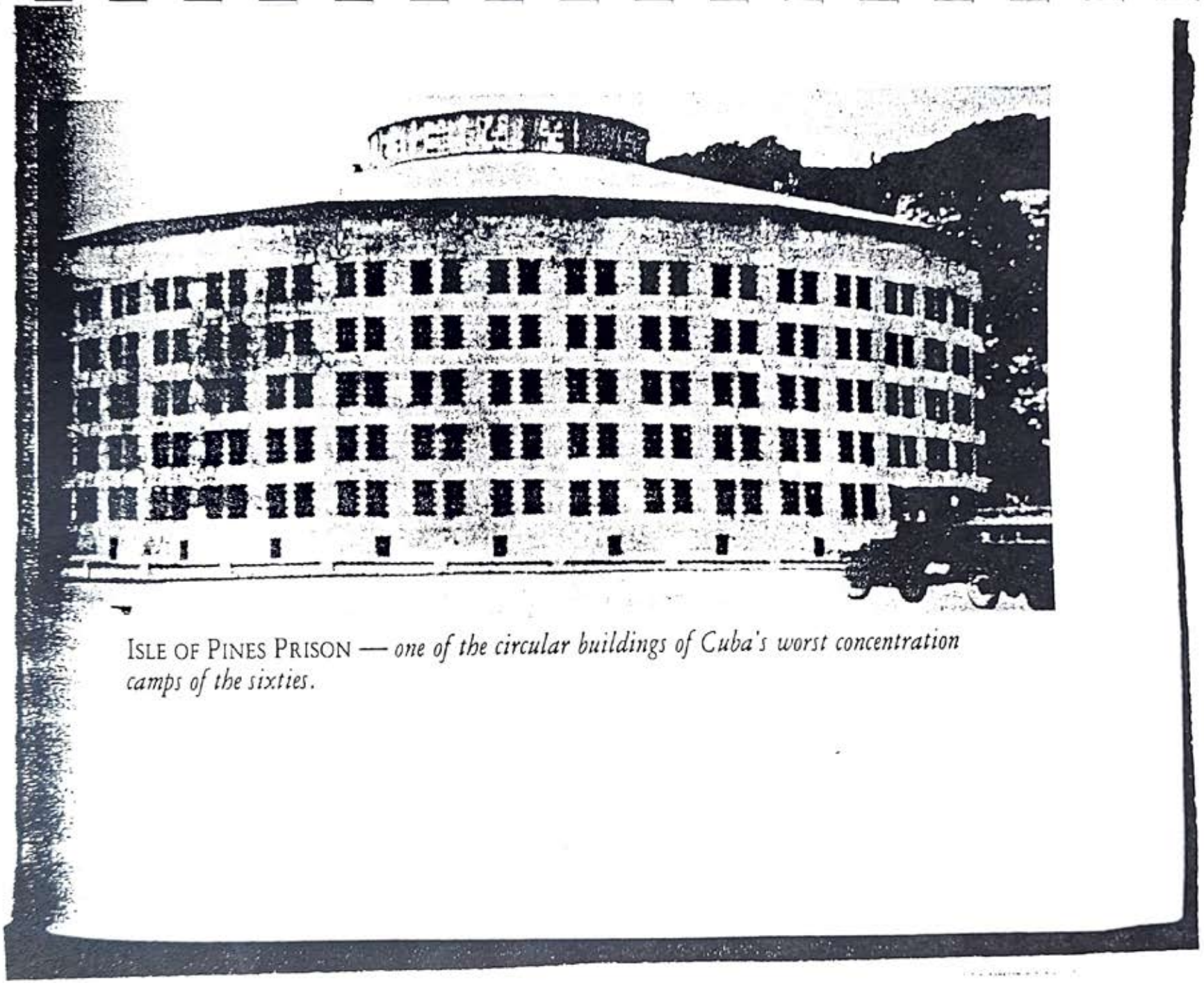
Chinese, and 750 blacks. Some Americans have become Cuban citizens - the language of the island is Spanish."

In the 1950's, some 10,000 people again lived on the island - half were prisoners, the rest were landowners, farmers and fishermen. Some Americans still remained on the island, notably the Sweetland family, owners of a huge estate, the last remaining American-held land of any consequence. The first Sweetland came to the island in 1908 from Cleveland, Ohio. The estate became a Castro military outpost after the revolution.

Under these conditions the island remained comparatively stable, under the Balestra regime - Castro being in prison on the Isle of Pines.

This prison, being round with a window in every cell, was said to be the most modern prison in the world at that time -- later becoming a Cuban concentration camp of the 1960's. After the revolution and Castro's rise to power, the Cubans renamed the island "The Isle of Youth." Cuban young people were sent there to be indoctrinated into the communist culture. Later, and now being called "The Isle of Butte," being used as an R & R resort for Cuban officials. The island has a floating population of gamblers, smugglers and prostitutes. Rich foreign tourists arrived for temporary stays at the luxurious Colony Hotel which has its own casino and abortion clinic. Some come for the exceptional scuba diving sites to take a look at some of the most breathtaking underwater landscapes in the Caribbean. There are 17 marked scuba sites with a wealth of coral, sponges and tropical fish, and the added enticement of perhaps finding a sunken treasure on the coast of "Treasure Island."

After the revolution, all of the remaining Americans were evicted from the island, having to leave all of their possessions behind. I have been able to locate and talk to some them now living in the United States. A William Stimson, living in New York City, and his brother John, living in Miami, Florida; Dorothy Anderson, living in Winter Haven, Florida; and one of the last of the Sweetland family, Fred Sweetland, living in Miami and Yellow Springs, Ohio and others. All were victims of the eviction.



ISLE OF PINES PRISON — *one of the circular buildings of Cuba's worst concentration camps of the sixties.*

Over the years I have tried to get information on the Isle of Pines from various government offices -- in Cuba, Washington, D.C., New York City, and from our own Representative and Senate offices. I have never received a reply from any of these attempts.

Last Spring I saw something in the newspaper about a Cuban Studies office in New York City. I wrote to them and, as before, received no reply.

However, not long thereafter, I received a phone call from New York City late on a Sunday night. The voice said, "This is Bill Stimson. I understand you are interested in the Isle of Pines." It seems Mr. Stimson had visited the above-mentioned Cuban Studies office and they told him of my inquiry and gave him my name. Mr. Stimson had lived on the Isle of Pines and was one of those evicted by Castro.

Through Mr. Stimson, I learned of several other former American "Pinors," as they call themselves, living in the U.S.A. Through these persons, I have developed a registry of 31 living American former "Pinors" who are scattered all over - New York City, Canada, Texas and Florida. All have received copies of the registry. I have talked to some by phone and written to others. As you can imagine, they are elderly and, not knowing who I am, are rather reluctant to talk much about their experiences.

One the people I have talked to several times is Mr. Fred Sweetland, Jr. of the family mentioned earlier in the story.

I received a lengthy letter from Mr. Sweetland describing the deplorable conditions on the Island and the destruction of all American property after the Castro takeover and the eviction of the Americans and the seizure of all American assets and property.

Isle Of Pines Flourished In Late '50s

'Bright Gem' Now 'Red H

Haven

Editorial From The Ft. Lauderdale News Nov 11, 1961

Things can change tremendously in only a few years.

Take, for instance, the Isle of Pines—the Cuban-owned island off the southwest coast of Cuba.

The other day, I was looking through some Isle of Pines brochures, sales pamphlets and newspaper articles that were put out in the latter part of the 1950's.

That happened to be the era in which a big land boom had blossomed on the Isle of Pines. Scores of new subdivisions had popped up almost overnight. Hundreds of Americans, as well as Cubans, were buying homesites or acreage, and real estate promoters were showing prospective land buyers the charms of the area through special plane excursions from Florida to the island.

The future of the Isle of Pines never looked brighter.

One sales pamphlet, offering 90-by-100-foot lots for as low as $495, called the Isle of Pines "the ideal retirement spot—a place that is truly healthy beyond belief."

It said: "Our lots are moving fast, and we suggest that you hurry your down payment as quickly as possible."

It concluded with this bit of reassurance: "The Cuban Constitution prohibits expropriation and discrimination against foreigners. Taxes are low and foreign investment is welcomed."

FAR FROM WORLD'S ANXIETIES

Another colorful brochure tagged the Isle of Pines as "a tropical paradise far from the rush and anxiety of the modern world."

In big red letters—which had no connection with the fate in store for the island—the brochure beckoned readers with the words: "Just what you've always dreamed about."

Underneath, it said: "A chance to relax and live longer . . . a chance for robust health and long years . . . a chance to start living again."

Advertising homesites for as low as $375, with $15 down and $15 a month, the brochure says: "It will pay you to act now."

Another brochure, in extolling the virtues of the island, said "there are no poisonous reptiles and practically no flying insects on the Island." Of course, that was before the advent of Castro.

Even Florida's biggest land tycoon, Arthur Vining Davis, got into the act. Davis purchased 200,000 acres of property along the southern end of the island, 1,000 acres along the famed Black Sand Beach, and the Isle of Pines airport.

And there was even talk that a bullfighting arena would be constructed on the island.

Newsmen who visited the Isle of Pines—and this writer was among them—returned greatly impressed with its natural beauty and sunny prospects.

One writer called it "a bright gem in the Caribbean." Another cited "increasing political stability and the growing social and economic maturity" of Cuba as reasons for investing on the island.

Anyone who had seen the Isle of Pines had to admit that the little island, which stretched about 40 miles one way and 20 miles in the other direction, was truly a tropical paradise.

[illegible] tropical paradise.

'PARADISE' BECOMES 'NIGHTMARE'

But, on Jan. 1, 1959, Fidel Castro assumed control of the Cuban government. And, as the months rolled on, communism increased its hold on the Cuban mainland and the attractive little island which had captured the hearts of so many.

Today, the Isle of Pines is an armed fortress.

The huge prison on the island is jammed with political prisoners, living and dying amidst conditions as horrible as anywhere in the world.

Soviet-made tanks frequently roll through Nueva Gerona, the island's capital. The airfields have been turned into heavily-guarded military installations. Huge guns have been entrenched along the once-peaceful shores. The Chinese Reds strolling around the island claim to be tourists or technicians, but they're really part of a Chinese Red army which is gradually building up all over Cuba.

American and Cuban homes and property have been confiscated with complete disregard of individual rights and quickly turned over to those who follow the Red line. Rape, robbery and murder are not uncommon occurrences.

It's impossible to estimate the total loss of property suffered by Americans who invested in the Isle of Pines. Some losses were small; others were large. Both the little investor and those in the higher income bracket have been affected.

One Ft. Lauderdale real estate promoter claims to have lost $100,000—practically everything he owned. A number of retirees, whom this corner has met, lost their life-time savings.

NOT only land and homes, but considerable personal property, has been grabbed up by Castro's thieves.

For these people, what was once the "gem of the Caribbean" has become the "nightmare of their lives."

* * *

THE TRANSITION TO RED PUPPET

Talking of Cuba, there's an interesting article in the current issue of Look magazine which tells of Fidel Castro's transition from "the hero of his people" to a Red puppet.

It's written by Teresa Casuso, one of Castro's closest companions during his rise to power, but who has since broken with the Castro government.

The attractive Cuban apparently believes that Castro was not a Communist when he first took over the leadership of the Cuban government. This, of course, is a completely opposite view of that taken by many of the so-called experts on Cuba.

In her article, she points out that Fidel Castro's trip to the United States in 1959 was the last opportunity the U.S. government had to attract the bearded Cuban leader with a policy of friendship.

"He went to the United States full of hope—but he did not receive a single offer of aid for Cuba," she claims.

Miss Casuso, who accompanied Castro to the U.S. on that visit, says: "Unfortunately, our arrival in Washington coincided with President Dwight Eisenhower's departure for a few days of golf. Vice President Richard Nixon had a private, unofficial interview with Fidel, which lasted about an hour. It seems that the conversation did not go beyond the light chatter characteristic of a courtesy call."

In the Look article, she points out that Fidel instructed his Ministry of the Treasury "not to go around asking for anything." He was disappointed, however, that he never received any offers.

It was during a visit to Cuba in June of 1960 that she began to notice the drastic changes occurring in her country.

"My friends seemed afraid to talk. All that I had feared now was happening. Fidel had become a dictator. Communists had moved into positions of power," she recalls.

All of this, and many other facts we have gathered through contacts with the Cuban people, have led us to wonder if the situation might not have been far different in Cuba today if a helpful hand had been extended to Cuba's ill economy in the Middle of 1959

EDITORIAL CONTINUES

COMMENT-
This is when CASTO TURNED TO RUSSIA for help.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

The Columbus Dispatch Newspaper

Sunday, May 21, 1991; Full page ad - Isle of Pines

Early October 1910, "Taylor Tragedy"

Sunday, September 13, 1959, p.10; "Isle of Pines Once a Mecca for Ohio Investors" by Evelyn M. Graham

Sunday, January 19, 1941; "Isle of Pines Failure Makes a Comeback" by F. A. Carlson

Tuesday, August 22, 1967; Isle of Pines is used as a Cuban Teen Center

Wednesday, September 6, 1967; Castro Converting Resorts to Youth Camp

Ohio State Journal newspaper

October 27, 1910; covers story of Taylor Tragedy

Fort Lauderdale News

November 11, 1961; "Bright Gem" Now 'Red Haven'

Continental History of Columbus and Franklin County - 1909; Vol. 11, p. 259; "Fred and Frank Hammond" by William Alexander Taylor

Pan American Union Bulletin, October 1911; Vol. 33, No. 4; "A Caribbean Island" by Granville Fortescue

The Geographical Review, January 1942, Vol. XXX 11 No. 1, p. 21; "American Settlement In The Isle De Pinos, Cuba" by F. A. Carlson, Ohio State University

Cuba By Seeing It; p. 92, "The Isle of Youth - A History of Plunder to Days of Wealth"

Taylor Family Correspondence

"The Taylors and the Isle of Pines" by Brian Yocum; June 1, 1987. A school English paper, 1987.

Columbus Monthly, March 1990; "The Isle of Pines" by Patty Hillis Carro

RESEARCH RESOURCES - CONSULTANTS

Dr. Robert W. McCormick, Worthington, Ohio - Historian

Steven Rogers, The Ohio State University - Map Room

The Columbus Public Library

Some quotations have been identified as such, some have not.